

Remarks at the Grand Canyon Announcing the Establishment and Expansion of National Monuments in Western States *January 11, 2000*

Thank you very much. Thank you; good morning. I know we're doing the right thing, because look at the day we've got. *[Laughter]* We've got the good Lord's stamp of approval on this great day.

Ann, thank you for your words and for your life and your example. Superintendent Arnerberger, thank you and all the staff at Grand Canyon National Park. And through you, I'd like to thank all the people who work for all of our national parks. I have spent quite a good deal of time as President in the national parks of America, and I grew up in one. I am, I suppose, therefore, more personally indebted to the people who give their lives to the Park Service than perhaps any of my predecessors. But I want to thank you.

I also want to thank all the people here from the Bureau of Land Management for the work they do and for the remarkable partnership that will be launched here. We have worked very hard these last 7 years to try to get these two agencies to work together, to support each other, to believe in each other, and to have common objectives. And I think we've made a lot of progress. So I want to thank the BLM people who are here, as well. Give them all a hand, thank you. *[Applause]*

I want to thank the environmental groups who are here. I want to welcome the children who are here. We have children from Grand Canyon Middle School and St. Mary's Middle School, and we welcome them. They are a lot about what today is all about. I want to thank Congressman Ed Pastor, of Arizona; Congressman Sam Farr, from California, for joining me; and former Congresswoman Karan English, from Arizona, for being here. Thank you. And I want to thank all the people from the White House who supported me in this decision: my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, who is here; and the head of our Council of Environmental Quality, George Frampton.

I want to thank someone I want to acknowledge particularly who worked with Secretary Babbitt on this, his Counselor, Mollie McUsic, who played a big role in what we celebrate today. She's not here because she's celebrating

an even bigger production: yesterday she gave birth to her son, Benjamin, so she couldn't be here, but I want to acknowledge her and her service.

And finally, I want to say this is, as you can see, a special day for Bruce Babbitt, not only because he has been a devoted champion of the Antiquities Act and of protecting land but also because he is the former Governor of Arizona. And when we served together as Governors, we made it a habit, Hillary and I did, at least once a year at these Governors' meetings to have dinner with Bruce and Hattie Babbitt. And he was giving me the speech that he gave here today 15 or 20 years ago. *[Laughter]* I've heard Bruce's speech a lot now, but it gets better every time he gives it. *[Laughter]*

Our country has been blessed by some outstanding Secretaries of the Interior, Gifford Pinchot, Harold Ickes. But I'll make a prediction: I believe when our time here is done and a fair analysis of the record is made, there will be no Secretary of the Interior in the history of the United States who has done as much to preserve our natural heritage as Bruce Babbitt, and I thank him for that.

Secretary Babbitt talked about Theodore Roosevelt's role. You might be interested to know that it was exactly 92 years ago today, on January 11, 1908, that he designated the Grand Canyon as one of our Nation's first national monuments. Now the first light falls on the 21st century and this breathtaking landscape he helped to protect. None of you who can see what is behind me can doubt the wisdom of that decision. And so it is altogether fitting that on this day and in this place we continue that great journey.

This morning, on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, I designated three new national monuments and the expansion of a fourth to make sure more of the land that belongs to the American people will always be enjoyed by them. What a remarkable place this Canyon is. It is in so many ways the symbol of our great natural expanse, our beauty, and our spirit.

Thirty years ago, for the first time, I watched the Sun set over the Grand Canyon for over 2 hours. This morning I got up and for about

an hour I watched the Sun rise over the Canyon for the first time. In both cases, watching the interplay of the changing light against the different layers and colors of the Canyon left me with a lifetime memory I will always cherish.

Millions and millions of Americans share those memories and a love of our natural treasure. In fact, I believe maybe if there's one thing that unites our fractious, argumentative country across generations and parties and across time, it is the love we have for our land. We know, as President Roosevelt said, we cannot improve upon this landscape. So the only thing we can add to it is our protection. President Roosevelt challenged us to live up to that ideal, to see beyond today or next month or next year. He said, "The one characteristic more essential than any other is foresight. It should be the growing nation with a future which takes the long look ahead."

I am very grateful for the opportunities that Vice President Gore and I have had to build on President Roosevelt's legacy, to take that long look ahead, to chart a new conservation vision for a new century. From our inner cities to our pristine wild lands, we have worked hard to ensure that every American has a clean and healthy environment. We've rid hundreds of neighborhoods of toxic waste dumps, taken the most dramatic steps in a generation to clean the air we breathe, to control emissions that endanger the health of our children and the stability of our climate. We have made record investments in science and technology to protect future generations from the threat of global warming. We've worked to protect and restore our most glorious natural resources, from the Florida Everglades to California's redwoods and Mojave Desert, to Escalante, to Yellowstone.

And we have, I hope, finally put to rest the false choice between the economy and the environment, for we have the strongest economy perhaps in our history, with a cleaner environment, cleaner air, cleaner water, more land set aside, safer food. I hope finally we have broken the hold of an old and now wrong idea that a nation can only grow rich and stay rich if it continues to despoil its environment and burn up the atmosphere. With new conservation technologies and alternative energy sources, that is simply no longer true. It has not been true for quite some years now, but it is only now coming to be recognized. And I can tell you that in the next few years, no one will be able

to deny the fact that we will actually have more stable, more widespread, more long-term economic growth if we improve the environment.

We are on the verge—the Detroit auto show this year is going to showcase cars that get 70 and 80 miles a gallon, with fuel injection and dual fuel sources. Before you know it, we will crack the chemical barriers to truly efficient production of biomass fuels, which will enable us to produce 8 or 9 gallons of biomass fuels with only 1 gallon of oil. That will be the equivalent of getting cars that use—get 160 miles to a gallon of gasoline. And this is just the beginning.

We built a low income working family housing project in the Inland Empire out in California, in cooperation with the National Home Builders, with glass in the windows that lets in 4 or 5 times as much light and keeps out 4 or 5 times as much heat and cold. And we promised the people on modest incomes that if they moved into these homes their energy bills would be, on average, 40 percent lower than they would have been in a home of comparable size. I can tell you that after 2 years, they're averaging 65 percent below that. So, therefore, their usage is much lower. We are just beginning.

So I ask all of you not only to celebrate this happy day but to see it in the larger context of our common responsibility and our opportunity to preserve this planet. [Applause] Thank you.

Now to the matter at hand. We began this unforgettable morning on the edge of this magnificent park. The deep canyons, rugged mountains, and isolated buttes of the North Rim of the Grand Canyon tell a story written over the course of billions of years, illustrated in colorful vistas and spectacular detail. It is a lonely landscape, a vast and vital area of open space which, as Secretary Babbitt said, includes a critical watershed for the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon. Today we protect more than a million acres of this land. That is an area larger than Yosemite Park. For America's families, we designate it as the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument. This effectively doubles the size of protected land around the Grand Canyon.

Second, we act to promote some of the most significant late prehistoric sites in the American Southwest. In the shadow of Phoenix there lies a rough landscape of mesas and deep canyons rich in archaeological treasures, distinctive art etched into boulders and cliff faces, and stone

masonry pueblos once inhabited by several thousand people centuries ago. As the suburbs of Phoenix creep ever closer to this space, we act to protect history and heritage. For America's families, we designate this land the Agua Fria National Monument.

Third, we are protecting thousands of small islands, rock outcroppings, and exposed reefs along California's splendid coastline. These are natural wonders, and they're also the habitat and nesting ground for sea mammals and hundreds of thousands of sea birds, forced from the shore because of development. Today we act to protect all the coastal islands, reefs, and rocks off California now owned by the Federal Government, designating them the California Coastal National Monument. Help Congressman Farr there. Clap! [*Applause*]

Fourth and finally, we will expand California's Pinnacles National Monument, created by President Roosevelt in 1908. Pinnacles is about 2 hours from Silicon Valley, but it's a world away. It includes soaring spires from an ancient volcano. Its mountain caves, desert, and wilderness are home to abundant wildlife and a haven for campers, climbers, and hikers. For one and all, Pinnacles is a sanctuary from sprawl. And for one and all, we act to keep it that way.

Now let me say again, all these areas are now owned by the Federal Government. Secretary Babbitt's recommendation that they be protected came as a result of careful analysis and close consultation with local citizens, State and local officials, Members of Congress.

Clearly, these lands represent many things to many people. In managing the new monuments, we will continue to work closely with the local communities to ensure that their views are heard and their interests are respected. This is not about locking lands up; it is about freeing them up from the pressures of development and the threat of sprawl, for all Americans, for all time.

I have said many times that the new century finds America with an unprecedented opportunity and therefore an unprecedented responsibility for the future, an opportunity and a responsibility rooted in the fact that never before, in my lifetime anyway, has our country enjoyed at one time so much prosperity, social progress, with the absence of internal crisis or external threat to our existence. Can you imagine the sacrifices laid down by our ancestors, generation after generation after generation, in the fond

hope that one day our country would be in the shape we are now in?

Now, when we're in this sort of position, we have a heavier responsibility even than our forebears did a century ago to take that long look ahead, to ask ourselves what the next century holds, what are the big challenges, what are the big opportunities, to dream of the future we want for our children, and then to move aggressively to build that future.

So I say again, there are these big challenges in the long look ahead: The aging of America—we'll double the number of people over 65 in the next 30 years; I hope to be one of them. The children of America, the largest and most diverse group ever—they all have to have a world-class education, whether they live in remote areas in Arizona or the poorest inner-city neighborhoods across America. The families of America—most of them are working; they need more help to balance work and parenting, and they all need access to affordable health care and child care. The poor of America—it is well to remember that there are people in places that have been left behind by this recovery. We have a strategy of economic empowerment that should be brought to every person willing to work. If we don't do it now, when will we ever get around to doing it?

The world we live in is ever more interdependent, not just on the environmental front but in many other ways. We have to build a more cooperative world. America is in a unique position now, with our economy, our military strength, our political influence. It won't last forever, and it's almost impossible for us to avoid having people resent us. But we have done our best to be responsible partners for peace and prosperity and for bridging the racial, religious, and ethnic gaps that tear apart so much of the world. It is time for us to work with others, against the dangers of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism and the other threats, and to build a better world together and to build one America here at home across the lines that have divided us too deeply for too long.

But a big part of all of this, in my opinion, the long look ahead, is making an absolute, firm commitment that going forward here at home in America and with friends and partners throughout the world, we will build a 21st century economy that is in harmony with the environment that we will continue to improve and protect even as we grow. And we have to keep

working until we convince people all over the world, in countries that long for the level of prosperity we take for granted, that they do not have to grow rich the way countries did in the 19th and the 20th century, that the fastest way to grow the economy today is the most environmentally responsible way. We owe that to the future.

Taking the long look ahead, as manifest in the protections we give today to the land around the Grand Canyon and in these other monuments, is fundamentally an act of humanity, and I might add also, an act of humility.

I think it's interesting that—I'll close with this—I had two rather interesting experiences today only proliferally related to what we're doing. One is, the press asked me whether I saw this as a legacy item, as if that was the reason for doing it. I said, "Well, I've been working on this stuff for 7 years now. And I grew up in a national park. I believe in what I'm doing today."

But I'll say again, this is an act of humility for all of us. When we were flying today over the North Rim, when we got further west along the Canyon, Bruce looked at me and he said, "See, there's some dormant volcanoes, and you

can see the residue of the ash." And I said, "When did that volcano erupt?" He said, "Oh, not very long ago, 10 or 20,000 years." And if you look out here, you see, 10 or 20,000 years from now, if the good Lord lets us all survive as a human race, no one will remember who set aside this land on this day. But the children will still enjoy it.

So I say to all of you, I hope you will go forth from this place today with a renewed dedication to the long look ahead, with a renewed sense of pride and gratitude, with a sense that we have reaffirmed our humanity as well as our devotion to our natural home, and a sense of humility that we are grateful, we are fortunate, and we are obligated to take the long look ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. at Grand Canyon Hopi Point. In his remarks, he referred to hiker Ann Weiler Walka, who introduced the President; and Robert L. Arnberger, Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park. The national monument proclamations are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Initiatives To Empower Young People

January 11, 2000

I am pleased to announce today that my budget for Fiscal Year 2001 will include over \$850 million for the Corporation for National Service. The investments in my budget will keep us on track to my goal of 100,000 AmeriCorps members serving annually. They will also fund several innovative initiatives to empower young people. Through a new AmeriCorps Reserves program, modeled on the military reserves, we will be able to engage former AmeriCorps members in service during times of crisis. Through a new Community Coaches program, we will place dedicated adults in 1,000 schools who can guide students in effective service and connect the school to the wider community. And through the Youth Empowerment grants I am proposing, we will be able to reward social entrepreneurship among young people who are finding their

own solutions to problems like youth violence and civic alienation.

Everyone who serves is a catalyst for change. Since the passage of the National and Community Service Trust Act, more than 150,000 young people have served in AmeriCorps. They represent our very best ideals—they have helped to immunize more than a million people; taught, tutored, or mentored 4.4 million children; helped build some 11,000 homes; and truly sparked a new spirit of public engagement across the land. The initiatives I am announcing today will help more Americans share in the power and promise of community service. I look forward to working with Congress to ensure their enactment.